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EASTER BELLS

MARGARET E. SANGSTER

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[p. 4

"Never yet was a spring-time
When the buds forgot to blow"

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EASTER BELLS

Poems

BY

MARGARET E. SANGSTER

ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK
HARPER AND BROTHERS
MDCCCXCVII

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TO

MY DEAR FRIEND

CORNELIA REMSEN JOHNSON

THESE SIMPLE VERSES

Are Lovingly Inscribed

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The poems here gathered, originally appeared in the several publications of Messrs. HARPER & BROTHERS, or in *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*, *The Youth's Companion*, *The Congregationalist*, *The Christian Intelligencer*, and *The Sunday-School Times*.

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Part 1

SONGS OF THE EASTER-TIDE

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EASTER BELLS

CHIME, solemn bells of Easter!
The shadows flee away,
And all the earth is smiling
In the glory of the day.

Ring, tender bells of Easter!
Beyond our toil and tears,
There wait for all the faithful
Heaven's long and happy years.

Break, joyous bells of Easter!
From far across the sea
Bring us the endless music
Of immortality.

Triumphant bells of Easter!
Again by angels rung,
Speak comfort to the sorrowing
Of every land and tongue.

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Blend, golden bells of Easter!
Heaven's fairest and its best,
To hush earth's clamorous discords
And soothe earth's sad unrest.

AWAKENING

NEVER yet was a spring-time,
Late though lingered the snow,
That the sap stirred not at the whisper
Of the south wind, sweet and low;
Never yet was a spring-time
When the buds forgot to blow.

Ever the wings of the summer
Are folded under the mould;
Life, that has known no dying,
Is Love's, to have and to hold,
Till sudden, the bourgeoning Easter!
The song! the green and the gold!

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GETHSEMANE

THE dew lay thick on thorn and flower,
And where the olives clustered gray
Weird shapes, within that awesome hour
Between the midnight and the day,
Seemed walking phantom-like abroad,
As if to vex the Son of God.

And all the city lay asleep,
O'er beast and bird the spell was cast,
And nothing stirred the silence deep,
Save where our Lord the vigil passed;
The long lone vigil when His prayer
Was uttered from a heart's despair.

"Oh, watch with me one little hour!"
His tender tones had pleading cried
Unto the faithful three, whose dower
Of love had kept them near His side.
Nay—folded hands and drooping head,
And slumber—quiet as the dead.

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No wonder then for weariness
The second time they fall asleep,
He turns in very tenderness,
And leaves them to repose so deep;
Alone He meets the serpent foe,
Alone He bears the bitter woe.

Gethsemane! Gethsemane!
We see the glory and the gloom!
Through all thy pain and agony,
Thy garden wears immortal bloom.
'Twas human friendship failed Him there,
But Love Divine did hear His prayer.

Life's bitter cups we too must take,
Life's bitter bread in anguish eat;
But when our hearts are like to break
There comes to us a whisper sweet,
"Fear thou no dim Gethsemane;
Thy sleepless Friend will watch with thee!"

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GOOD-FRIDAY

Be hushed, my heart, remembering
What dole was given for thee,
How pressed on Him thy burden, when,
For all the sinful sons of men,
Christ went to Calvary.

The mournful journey that He made,
Each step was taken for thee.
Be hushed, my heart, let clamor cease;
Prepare a chamber white with peace,
His resting-place to be.

In solemn shadow of the cross,
O soul, abide till He
Who tasted death ere thou shouldst know
Its bitterness of utmost woe
With strength shall guerdon thee.

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Its Via Dolorosa still
 Each life of earth must see,
And in some hour, or soon or late,
Must bend beneath the crushing weight
 Of earth's Gethsemane.

But heart, in love and prayer look up
 Beyond the awesome tree;
The heaven of heavens is reft to-day;
All angels march the starry way
 That leads from Calvary.

For conquering, the Lord of life
 (His mighty legions free)
Goes forward while the ages roll;
The price of every ransomed soul
 Full paid on Calvary.

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AN EASTER SONG

THE golden sun climbs up the sky,
The shadows flee away,
Oh! weary heart, forget to sigh,
God sends thee Easter Day!
Long was the night, chill was the air,
And grief o'er brooded long,
Yet is the new world white and fair,
Uplift thine Easter song!

The cross that bowed thee with its weight
By strength of prayer is stirred,
Till it shall bear thee soon or late,
As wings upbear the bird.
The life that thrills from star to star,
And beats in leaf and stem,
Is wider than the heavens are,
And blesses thee from them.

Wert thou cast down, wert thou dismayed,
Dear child of One above,
Behold the earth in light arrayed,
The light of deathless love.

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Oh! listen to the word that wakes
 In every budding flower,
And take the bread the Master breaks,
 In His triumphant hour.

Nor feel, dear one whom Jesus saves,
 And heartens day by day,
That earth is but a place of graves,
 A dim and dolorous way.
As mothers hush their little ones,
 God puts his own to sleep;
 And long as time is marked by suns,
Their beds His angels keep.

Not once a year alone, but oft
 In all our years of days,
Shall fall the word or promise, soft
 As hymns the blessed raise.
If but we bend the listening ear
 To hear upon the strand
The wave-beat of the endless life,
 Not far, but close at hand.

For those who hear, and hearing yearn,
 The King hath secrets sweet;
Their hearts within them thrill and burn,
 They wait His coming feet.

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Then swift the sun climbs up the sky!
The shadows flee away!
Oh! weary heart, forget to sigh,
God sends thee Easter Day!

"WHO ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD"

O EARTH, forget thy winter; O Nature, bud and bloom,
And clothe the slopes with greenness that late were hung with gloom.
O clustered Easter lilies, your gleaming censers lift,
Forth comes the mighty Victor, the rocky tomb to rift.

O gentle Easter angels, be swift to greet the day
When from the guarded chamber the stone is rolled away,
And Christ the King steps onward, with Death beneath him dead,
And leads His ransomed homeward, with glory on His head.

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Three days ago they laid Him, all pulseless
on the bier;
The thorn-marked brow was pallid; their
hearts stood still in fear.
Three days of solemn stillness, three days of
grief sublime,
A pause when seraphs waited to hear the
throbs of Time.

And now? No burst of music, as when a
babe He came,
Though heaven is thrilled with rapture, and
cherub-anthems flame,
In soundless flight on sweeping, the shining
ones descend
To give our earth the key-note or songs
that shall not end.

What though there are who listen in vain
for voices hushed?
What though there are who languish o'er
sweet hopes early crushed?
Still peal the Easter chorals adown the lonely
years,
And yet the Easter promise hath solace for
our tears.

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The Christ for us hath conquered our one
relentless foe,
Our vanished ones forever with Him are
safe, we know.
O fragrant Easter lilies, like tapers fair ye
stand,
To light the silent portals that guard the
deathless land.

Haste, gentle Easter angels, who rolled the
stone away,
Come melt our loveless spirits, shame unbelief
this day,
And help us tread it under our footsteps as
we sing
The joyous hymns of Easter around our
risen King.

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THE SPLENDOR OF LILIES

Oh, rare as the splendor of lilies,
And sweet as the violet's breath,
Comes the jubilant morning of Easter,
The triumph of life over death;
And fresh from the earth's quickened bosom
Full baskets of flowers we bring,
And scatter their satin soft petals
To carpet a path for our King.

In the countless green blades of the meadow,
The sheen of the daffodil's gold,
In the tremulous blue on the mountains,
The opaline mist on the wold,
In the tinkle of brooks through the pasture,
The river's strong sweep to the sea,
Are signs of the day that is hasting
In gladness to you and to me.

Oh, dawn in thy splendor of lilies,
Thy fluttering violet breath,
Oh, jubilant morning of Easter,
Thou triumph of life over death!
Then fresh from the earth's quickened bosom
Full baskets of flowers we bring,
And scatter their satin soft petals
To carpet a path for our King.

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EASTER CHORDS

CHRIST the Lord is risen to-day!
Sons of men and angels say,
Raise your joys and triumphs high,
Sing ye heavens, and earth reply.

Sweet, sweet and clear the dear old strain
across the aisles is pealing,
The choir uplifts its stately chords that
throb with tender feeling,
For never time as Easter time brings glad-
ness to our eyes,
When morning unto evening tells the rapt-
ure of the skies.

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle's won.
Lo! the sun's eclipse is o'er,
Lo! He sets in blood no more.

Again we read the wondrous tale, how on
the Cross they bound Him,
How Jew and Roman jeered and scoffed in
cruel throngs around Him,

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Till noon forgot its light in gloom and all
the world grew black,
While He who came to save us paid the
price with naught held back.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ hath burst the gates of hell!
Death in vain forbids His rise,
Christ hath opened Paradise.

Oh! listen, thrilling far and loud the Gloria
strains excelling,
For death for evermore is dead, triumphant
shouts are swelling.
They who have passed beyond the stream
and reached the other side,
Exult in life that never ends; with Christ
are satisfied.

Hail, the Lord of earth and heaven!
Praise to Thee by both be given!
Thee we greet triumphant now;
Hail! the Resurrection Thou!

In solemn joy, in trustful hope, in faith that
cannot falter,
This Easter Day we bring our meed of
praises to God's altar.

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All crowns are set on Christ's dear head,
the crown of thorns that wore;
Forever and forever more our Saviour we
adore.

Oh! risen Lord victorious, oh! Son of God
Most High,
Who for our sins did bear the yoke, who
came for us to die;
In Thee we conquer death and hell, in Thee
we rise and reign;
Life throbs to-day victorious in every pulsing
vein.

We have no fear, we have no doubt, we read
redemption's story,
And earth and heaven together meet in
ecstasies of glory.

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UNDER THE CLOUD

UNDER the cloud we pass,
 The cloud that dims our skies,
 The hot tears blur our eyes,
We enter the cloud, alas!

We mourn for our darling gone;
 For the days that come no more,
 With her laugh at the dear home door;
We are desolate, being alone.

We sigh for the might-have-beens,
 For the words we did not say—
 Was it only yesterday?—
And memory sits and spins

A web that is like a shroud,
 So thick and dark does it fold,
 Woe for the tale that is told!
Like children we cry aloud.

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For when she was here, and yet
 Our own, for love's sweet grace,
 When the lighting up of her face
Could banish our dull regret

And give us surcease from pain,
 We took as a common thing
 (Ah! there is the sharpened sting)
The touch, the look, the strain,

The music and cheer she gave—
 And now she is gone away,
 Lost into heaven's bright day;
And we—plant flowers on her grave.

Aye, friends, we are under the cloud,
 So white, and chill, and thick,
 And the heart grows faint and sick,
So fast do our wan thoughts crowd.

But the cloud has an upper side,
 And somewhere out of the blue
 Our darling is looking through,
And our sorrow is glorified.

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ANGELS

In the old days God sent His angels oft
To men in threshing-floors, to women pressed
With daily tasks; they came to tent and croft,
And whispered words of blessing and of rest.

Not mine to guess what shape those angels wore,
Nor tell what voice they spoke, nor with what grace
They brought the dear love down that evermore
Makes lowliest souls its best abiding place.

But in these days I know my angels well;
They brush my garments on the common way,
They take my hand, and very softly tell
Some bit of comfort in the waning day.

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And though their angel-names I do not ken,
 Though in their faces human love I read,
They are God-given to this world of men,
 God-sent to bless it in its hours of need.

Child, mother, dearest wife, brave hearts that take
 The rough and bitter cross, and help us bear
Its heavy weight when strength is like to break,
 God bless you all, our angels unaware!

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WHEN SPRING COMES BACK

WHEN Spring comes back the violets lift
Their shyly hooded faces,
Where late the frozen snows adrift
Heaped high the woodland spaces.
When Spring comes back the sunbeams dance
On green leaves all a-quiver,
And grasses rally, spear and lance,
By rippling brook and river.

When Spring comes back the lilies haste,
What time the bells are ringing,
To bring their perfumes, pure and chaste,
From hallowed censers swinging.
Shine dim church aisles on Easter day
Beneath the lilied whiteness,
And happy children kneel and pray
Amid the serried brightness.

When Spring comes back a merry train,
Of merry wings come with her,
The robin and the wren again
Come gayly flitting hither;

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The bluebird and the oriole,
 The martin and the swallow.
"Away," they chant, "with grief and dole,
 Here's spring, and summer 'll follow!"

When Spring comes back, when Spring comes
 back,
 Chill winter will be over!
Erelong we'll hear the elfin drums
 Where bees are deep in clover.
After we catch the swaying lilt
 Of winds among the daisies,
And see the rose-cups' sweetness spilt
 Among the garden mazes.

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AN EASTER IDYL

MANY a year the Easter came, laughing o'er
land and sea,
Wafting the perfume of lilies wherever its
dawn-light fell,
Kindling the flames of the roses, and waving
their torches free,
Far over hill and mountain, and deep in
the lonesome dell.

And many a year at Easter I sat in the old
church loft,
And lifted my voice in Te Deums, and
sang like a mavis clear,
Sang of glory and triumph, and my voice
thrilled sweet and soft,
O! many a time in the Easter of many a
cloudless year.

Till there fell a season of anguish, when the
stars went out in the sky,
When I covered my face, and bent my
knees, and beat with a hopeless prayer

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At the golden gates of heaven that were
shut to my bitter cry,
While the Angel of Death at my threshold
was deaf to my love's despair.

Then, straight on that wild, bleak winter
there followed the fairest spring,
With snowdrops and apple blossoms in
riotous haste to bloom,
With the sudden note of the robin, and the
flash of the bluebird's wing ;—
And all that was mine of its beauty was
the turf that covered a tomb.

O! the bells rang out for Easter, rang strong
and sweet and shrill,
And the organ's rolling thunder pealed
through the long church aisle,
And the children fluttered with flowers, and
I sat mute and still,
I who had clean forgotten both how to
pray and to smile.

And I murmured in fierce rebellion: "There
is naught that endures below,
Naught but the lamentations that are rent
from souls in pain;"

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And the joy of the Easter music, it struck
on my ears like a blow,
For I knew that my day was over, I could
never be glad again!

And then—how it happened I know not—
there was One in my sight who stood,
And lo! on His brow was the thorn-print, in
His hands were the nails' rough scars,
And the shadow that lay before Him was
the shade of the holy rood,
But the glow in His eyes was deeper than
the light of the morning stars.

"Daughter," He said, "have comfort! Arise!
keep Easter-tide!
I, for thy sins who suffered and died on
the cruel tree,
I, who was dead, am living; no evil shall e'er
betide
Those who, in earth or heaven, are pledged
unto life with Me."

Now I wake to a holier Easter, happier than
of old,
And again my voice is lifted in Te Deums
sweet and strong;

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I send it to join the anthem in the wonderful
city of gold,
Where the hymns of the ransomed forever
are timed to the Easter song.

And I can be glad with the gladness that is
born of a perfect peace;
On the strength of the Strong I am resting;
I know that His will is best.
And who that has found that secret from
darkness has won release,
And even in sorrow's exile may lift up her
eyes and be blessed.

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IN THE SHADOW

We walk within the shadow, and we feel its thickening fold
That wraps us round and holds us close, a cloak against the cold;
The day is growing sombre, and the joyous light has fled,
And beneath our feet the road is rough, and clouds are overhead.

We sit within the shadow, and in that silence dumb,
To us in softened echoes remembered voices come;
Dear eyes that closed in slumber once, dear hands that straightened lie,
Awaken tender yearnings as the day wanes slowly by.

We rest within the shadow, though the hurrying people go
On errands swift for gold and gain, beyond us, to and fro;

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We have no care for transient things; we
wish no more to strive
As once we did; we rest, we dream, we feel
but half alive.

Our resting and our waiting, and our plodding
on the way,
With the sunshine of the past casting
darkness on to-day,
With no caring for the future, while the
heartache holds us fast,
With no thought for any pleasure—ah! 'tis
well these cannot last.

For the shadow always lifts, and the sunlight
glows again;
There are sudden gleams of brightness, sweet
clear shining after rain;
And we gird ourselves for action, strengthened
we arise and go
From the sanctuary outward, where the feet
tramp to and fro.

Life must have its sometime sorrow; but
the years that drift along
Touch the minor chords but seldom; there
are spaces blithe with song.

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Sometimes we must face the shadow, where
the wind blows keen and cold,
But the shadow fades at dawning, and the
east is flecked with gold.

A DREAM

SOME perfect day I shall not need
To bend my brows o'er baffling tasks;
Some perfect day my eyes will read
The meaning hid 'neath clouding masks;
Some perfect day my word and deed
Will fill the ideal my spirit asks.

Dear perfect day of days to be,
Which safe the steadfast heaven doth keep
Deep filled with love and rest for me,
Close pressed with sheaves I yet shall reap,
When they who watch beside me see
Only that I have fallen asleep.

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A WAY-SIDE GRAVE

Our upland journey wound its way
Past hills that wore the green of May.

The dogwood starred the shadowy copse;
The light breeze rocked the pine-tree tops.

Far off we saw the village spires
And fluttering smoke of household fires.

But here of voice or tool no sound
Fell on the cloistered hush profound.

Sudden I drew my bridle rein,
Dim, shining out from moss and stain,

Alone amid a fallow field,
And half by brier and weed concealed,

I saw a rough stone cross that bore
One little dear home name; no more.

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Some heart had ached, some house had known
The desolate hunger for its own,

When, hollowed out this narrow grave,
They laid, whom love had died to save

But could not, one whose name had been
To her own people "Josephine."

A ruined chimney, and the bloom
Of a pale purple lilac plume

Close by, and this small way-side cross
Told all the tale of love and loss;

While near and far the fragrant day
Was golden glimmering with May.

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COMFORT ONE ANOTHER

COMFORT one another;
For the way is growing dreary,
The feet are often weary,
And the heart is very sad.
There is heavy burden-bearing,
When it seems that none are caring,
And we half forget that ever we were glad.

Comfort one another
With the hand-clasp close and tender,
With the sweetness love can render,
And the look of friendly eyes.
Do not wait with grace unspoken;
While life's daily bread is broken,
Gentle speech is oft like manna from the skies.
Comfort one another;
There are words of music ringing
Down the ages, sweet as singing

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Of the happy choirs above.
Ransomed saint and mighty angel
Lift the grand, deep-voiced evangel,
Where forever they are praising the Eternal Love.

Comfort one another;
By the hope of Him who sought us
In our peril—Him who bought us,
Paying with His precious blood;
By the faith that will not alter,
Trusting strength that shall not falter,
Leaning on the One divinely good.

Comfort one another;
Let the grave-gloom lie behind you,
While the Spirit's words remind you
Of the home beyond the tomb,
Where no more is pain or parting,
Fever's flush or tear-drops starting,
But the presence of the Lord, and for all His people room.

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GOD'S WAY

OUR way had been to smooth her upward road,
Easing the pressure of each heavy load,

Never to let her white hand know a soil,
Never her heart to feel the weight of toil,

Could we have shielded her from every care,
Kept her forever young and blithe and fair,

And from her body warded every pain,
As from her spirit all distress and strain,

This had been joy of joys, our chosen way.
God led her by a different path; each day

Sorrow and work and anxious care He gave,
And strife and anguish, till her soul grew brave.

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Through weary nights she leaned upon His
love,
Through cloudy days she fixed her gaze
above.

Her dearest vanished, but in faith and trust
She knew them safe beyond the perished dust.

Refined by suffering, like a little child
She grew; into her Father's face she smiled.

And then, one day of days, an angel came;
In flute-notes sweet she heard him breathe
her name.

Perhaps from out the rifted heaven she saw
Her mother's face look forth; in raptured
awe

We caught the last swift glory in her eyes,
Ere, sleeping here, she woke in Paradise.

God's way was best, with reverent lips we
say,
God's way *is* best, and praise our God to-day.

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EASTER FLOWERS

BLOOMING to garland Easter,
White as the drifted snows,
Are the beautiful vestal lilies,
The myriad-petaled rose,
Carnations with hearts of fire,
And the heather's fragrant spray—
Blooming to garland Easter,
And strew our King's highway.

Late we had gloom and sorrow,
But the word from Heaven forth
Has scattered the clouds before it
Like a trumpet blown from the north;
And east and west and southward
The flowers arise to-day
To garland the blithesome Easter,
And strew the King's highway.

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Carry the flowers of Easter
To the darkened house of woe,
With their message of strength and comfort
Let the lilies of Easter go;
Scatter the Easter blossoms
In the little children's way;
Let want and pain and weakness
Be cheered on our Easter day.

For lilac, and rose, and bluebell,
And whatever name they wear,
The spell of the flowers of Easter
Is a spell to banish care;
And blooming to garland Easter,
They will shine in church to-day,
The lovely things that have awakened
To deck our King's highway.

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Part II

HOME AND HEARTH

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LOVE'S KINGDOM

You see no pomp of circumstance,
 No entourage of pride,
My lowly seeming to enhance
 As I walk by your side.
All day, at others' beck and call,
 My work obscure is done,
But off my shabby garments fall
 When comes the set of sun

You may not know it, friend, but then
 I, walking by your side,
Am crowned and sceptred, king of men.
 Let none my state deride;
For when I turn my own latch-key
 My wife is at the stair,
The baby claps her hands with glee,
 And I am royal there.

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WHEN POLLY PLAYED FOR DANCING

WHEN Polly played for dancing,
Her slender fingers flew
Across the flashing ivory keys
As if they winked at you.
The music bubbled under
The magic of her hand
As if the very notes were mad
To join the festive band.

When Polly struck the measure
Of two-step or of waltz,
The oldest there grew young again
And laughed at time's assaults;
While lovely Sweet and Twenty,
And happy Sweet Sixteen,
Went floating light as thistle-down
The merry staves between.

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When Polly played the lancers
 You should have seen us bow,
And weave the figures out and in;
 Would we were dancing now,
With Polly playing bravely,
 And all the old set there,
Till who'd believe 'twas midnight by
 The clock upon the stair.

Then Polly played as gayly
 As the youngest heart can feel,
And lad and lass we danced amain
 The blithe Virginia reel.
If Cupid sped his arrows,
 Be sure his aim was true,
When Polly played for dancing, and
 The hours fairly flew.

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WEDDED HANDS

THE year, sweet wife, is on the wane—
The happy-hearted year,
That brought us only tithes of pain,
And rounded sheaves of cheer.

Beside the glowing embers we
Need envy no one's pelf;
Content am I to partner be
In firm of "Wife and Self."

Swift glide away the last low sands,
Fast fades the hearth-fire's light;
We face the world with wedded hands—
Good-night, old year, good-night!

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THE AMBULANCE

I NEVER see in our bustling town,
Where the midsummer sun pours fiercely down,
The swift onrush of the ambulance
But I think of the blessed countenance
Of One who walked by lane and field,
And with voice and look the suffering healed.

Still, where the city's woes are thick,
The dear Christ-spirit heals the sick.
And yet he lives in the hearts of men,
And sends his angels with speed again
Wherever the weary plod and fall,
His care and tenderness over all.

And the angels carry lint and lance,
And drive in the city's ambulance;
Are bluff of speech and deft of hand,
And quick with accents of command;
And the wind of their coming clears the way
For a breath of heaven in the darkest day.

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THE HOME-BOUND SHIP

FAR out on the stormy ocean
There's a ship that is faring home,
Cleaving the great green breakers,
Parting the curd white foam;
Passing the mighty icebergs,
Crossing the surging sea,
The ship that is bringing my dear ones
Safely back to me.

Many a ship is sailing
Forth on the ocean vast;
Laden with gold and spices,
Gallant from deck to mast;
But only one ship I dream of,
For only one ship I pray,
The ship that over the ocean
Is making her home-bound way.

'Tis just as were mine the single
Home out of all the world,
Just as were mine the only
Flag to the winds unfurled,
As over the great green billows,
Parting the curd white foam,
I think of the ship that is hasting,
Bringing my loved ones home.

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A COQUETTE

I AM never in doubt of her goodness,
I am always afraid of her mood,
I am never quite sure of her temper,
For wilfulness runs in her blood.
She is sweet with the sweetness of spring-time—
A tear and a smile in an hour—
Yet I ask not release from her slightest caprice,
My love with the face of a flower.

My love with the grace of the lily
That sways on its slender fair stem,
My love with the bloom of the rosebud,
White pearls in my life's diadem!
You may call her coquette if it please you,
Enchanting, if shy or if bold,
Is my darling, my winsome wee lassie,
Whose birthdays are three, when all told.

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CAMP ECHOES

"RALLY round the flag, boys! Give it to the breeze!"
Bless the dear old fiddle that wakes the gallant air.
Once we thundered it in chorus like the booming of the seas,
Wives and sweethearts joining in, with an "Amen" to the prayer.

We're a lot of grizzled fellows, not so much to look at now!
Young and full of vigor when the war began,
Some behind the counter, and some behind the plough,
But we rallied for the country, enlisted to a man.

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Counting not the cost, boys! Never sordid aims
Dimmed our record, hasting to the conflict's brunt;
Each to serve the nation, we answered to our names,
And the flag before us, we hurried to the front.

Can't you see it waving, the banner of our love,
Where the Shenandoah loops and twists like mad?
Can't you hear the shouting, the dying groans above,
When we'd won a battle, and—lost the best we had?

Blessings on the music of "Tramp, tramp, tramp!"
How it rang its challenge down the serried lines,
Cheered us when, like hounds a-leash, we strained through days in camp,
Or crashed, with Sherman's storm-cloud, through Georgia's solemn pines.

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Here, like useless hulks, boys, we doze the
days away—
Doze and dream and spin our yarns; but
when we come to die,
Lights out, some true hand for us let "taps"
the last time play,
Then wrap the flag about us in the bed
where last we lie.

THE REASON

SOMETHING has changed him; yesterday
He passed me frowning, scarcely bowed,
And almost looked the other way,
A careless stranger in the crowd.

But now? What grasp of cordial hand!
What cheery laugh, what genial tone!
'Mid eddying throngs we pause and stand
As if Broadway were ours alone.

Dear fellow! One word tells the tale;
'Tis not the world of yesterday;
His heart gives every comrade hail;
His wife is coming home to-day!

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THREE BASKETS

BERTHA'S basket: Maiden Bertha, with the
merry dancing eyes,
And the brow whereon a shadow would be
such a rare surprise—
What has she within this dainty shell of
rushes silken-lined,
Where so many maiden musings innocently
are enshrined?

Gayly mingling ends of worsted; beads that
glitter silver-bright;
Fleece of Shetland, light and airy, lying there
in waves of white;
Broidered linen, wrought for pastime in the
dreamy summer hours;
And perhaps a poet's idyl, read amid the
leaves and flowers.

Bertha's basket: Mother Bertha. Ah, serener
light hath grown
In the thoughtful eyes; the forehead hath
some flitting sorrows known.

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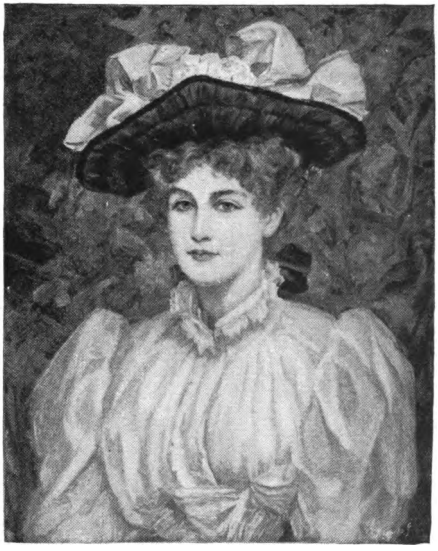
In the larger basket looking, other handiwork we find,
Where the woman's heart its pleasure, love, and longing hath enshrined.

Little aprons; little dresses; little trousers at the knee
Patched with tender art, that no one shall the mother's piecing see;
Flannel, worked with skill and patience; and an overflowing store,
Every size, of little stockings, always needing one stitch more.

Bertha's basket: Grandma Bertha; for the years have run their way,
And it seems in looking backward it was only yesterday
That the maiden tripped so lightly, that the matron had her cares—
Age slips on so gently, gently, like an angel unawares.

Grandma's work is contemplative. With the scintillance of steel
Gleam the needles, smooth with flashing off the toe or round the heel,

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MAIDEN BERTHA

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Leisure days have found the lady; but her face is deeply lined,
And her heart is as a temple, where are hallowed memories shrined.

As along the dusty high-road rise the milestones one by one,
Telling here and there the distance, until all the way is done,
So a woman's basket marks her journey o'er the path of life,
Folding dearest work for others, whether she be maid or wife.

CONVALESCENT

THE fever went at the turn of the night,
She lies like a lily white and still,
But her eyes are full of the old love-light;
She'll live, if it be God's will.

God's will had it been to snatch her away,
We had bowed, we had knelt, we had kissed the rod,
But His own dear will bids our darling stay,
And we, we just thank God.

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HER LETTER

SHE has written her little letter;
It was hard enough to do,
With mistress forever ringing the bell
Always for something new.
When the spelling was very uncertain,
And the writing's blotted and slow.
But she's written her little letter
Over the sea to go.

It will carry her last month's wages—
A couple of pounds at least.
It means for the dear home people
No end of a happy feast.
A little shawl for her mother,
And shoes for the baby's feet,
For the pale-faced ailing sister
Some delicate things to eat.

She follows her little letter
Over the plunging sea.
She sits again by the smoking peat,
And leans on her father's knee.

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There are gossiping neighbors calling,
No end of kith and kin,
And they laugh and chat and linger
As their endless tales they spin.

And it isn't work forever,
With bells that make one start;
And it isn't only the wages—
It's something tugs at the heart
And sets her laughing and crying
As she follows across the sea
What she wrote at her kitchen-table
When she had a half-hour free.

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BON VOYAGE!

To Eastern lands, far-famed in song and story,
These latest pilgrims turn as to a shrine,
Their faces yearning for the ancient glory
And fain to catch anew the gleam divine.

In thought their eyes have caught the heavenly vision,
As his of old who saw the golden stair
Which made his pillowing stone a place Elysian,
While to and fro God's angels journeyed there.

Ere many days this world of axe and hammer,
Of ploughshares cleaving deep a virgin soil,
Will vanish, with its loud, insistent clamor;
And they, with joy of him who findeth spoil,

Will, each in full and overrunning measure,
Receive the blessing of the early dawn,
Discern the meanings, reap the sheaves of pleasure
The old life keeps, from our swift heartbeats gone.

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Our share who stay at home will be to capture
A reflex gladness, following day by day
Their happy progress, fancying the rapture
Of dreams come true, along the hallowed way.

For they, by mount and vale and village lowly,
By Jordan's river and Gennesaret's wave,
Will trace the blessed footprints of the Holy,
And live on earth with Him who came to save.

Theirs be the portion of the twelve who clustered
Around the Master, wheresoe'er He went;
Theirs the sweet knowledge of His presence, lustred
By heaven's own light and fulness of content.

Dear friends, our hearts, your company still keeping,
Will overflow in loving prayers for you!
God give you ease and safety, waking, sleeping,
And bring you home—the pilgrim journey through.

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SNOWDROP AND CROCUS

LONG were the wintry days and cold,
No bloom could pierce the frozen mould,
Chill blew the gale o'er mount and wold.

But who remembers frost and snow,
When sweet to-day the south winds blow,
And birds are flying to and fro?

We hear the robin's flute-note clear;
It is the love-tide of the year;
Soft shadows play on field and mere.

A vestal in her garments white,
The snowdrop gleams in purest light,
The crocus smiles in jewels dight.

Dear April, leading on to May,
Sweet Spring, upon her royal way!
No wonder earth is glad to-day.

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VIOLETS

A FRIEND brought sweetest violets,
And laid them in my lap to-day,
And straight the Winter afternoon
Put on the brightness of the May.

The silent flowers, with subtle breath,
Beguiled away my thoughts of pain;
"O heart," their voiceless odor said,
"Put on thy robes of light again!"

"For Winter wanes, and Spring returns—
Dear Spring, when all things lovely shine;
And hidden ways and cloistered cells
Grow radiant as with bloom divine.

"That path cannot be wholly dark
Which God hath sown with violets:
Lo! on the earth, as in the sky,
For thee His morning star he sets."

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A CLUSTER OF ROSES TO A FRIEND

Roses, beautiful roses,
 Holding the Summer's light,
Each in its graceful carven cup,
 Crimson and yellow and white,
Breathing the sweetest odors,
 Wearing the richest hues,
Distilled from the clouds of heaven,
 And the heaven-ascending dews.

Roses, wonderful roses,
 Their texture royally fine,
Each in its rare completeness
 Wrought by a Hand divine.
The bud with the moss around it,
 The stem with the steadfast brier,
What could so comfort the fainting heart,
 So answer its mute desire?

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The roses brought me a blessing,
For they came in a weary hour,
And sweet were the thoughts they whispered
Of one, herself a flower.
Ever may bloom about her
The starriest flowers of the morn,
And still may all her roses
Be free from the piercing thorn.

But if the thorns must wound her,
Since oft, in this life of ours,
The sharpest suffering reaches
Those who have noblest dowers.
May she rest with trust unchanging
On the strength of the Friend above,
And so shall roses and thorns alike
Be the gifts of His matchless love.

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THE BLOOM OF THE CACTUS

RARE splendor of scarlet in royalest fashion
My rich flower wears, as it thrills to the shine
Of the proud sun, who loves such a chalice to flash on,
And pours in its deep heart his nectar divine.

Superbly it greets me, this joyless ascetic,
So lately whose spiked leaves I fancied to wear
Through slow-waning seasons, a meaning pathetic,
Upheld like the hands of a martyr in prayer.

Lo! now, for the cross of its standing in duty
So patient, while near it gay neighbors were bright,
It is suddenly crowned with superlative beauty,
Transfigured and wondrous in shimmering light.

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In shape rare and perfect, in texture like satin,
In tint like the ruby reflecting the sun,
The flowers around it grow pale and look flat in
The arrogant shadow of this haughty one.

It is as though, lost, all alone and unmated,
A beggar maid stood in the court of a king,
Unknown 'mid the throngs who there clamorous waited,
Till he saw her, and wooed her with robe and with ring.

And throwing the grace of his mantle above her,
Cried out to the world, "See! this jewel is mine,
I need her, I yearn for her, crown her and love her,"
So blooms my rich flower in the sun's golden shine.

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INFELIX

WHO, gazing on thy cradle sleep
In far sweet days let down from heaven
(Such days there be to mothers given),
Had thought of shadows gathering deep,

Or caught upon the baby brow
One faintest sign of furrowing scar,
One presage of the lurid star
That overarcs thy pathway now.

Not love itself had power to rend
The future's kind opaque away,
Not love itself had power to stay
A single dart that fate should send.

Perchance thine angel watching knew,
And veiled his face, and hushed his song
One moment in the radiant throng,
Ah, God! what could an angel do,

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Seeing in sinister outline
 The portent of that baleful dross
 That sum of grief and shame and loss,
Which only angels could divine?

Yet, even as *infelix* I write,
 A mighty wave blots out the word,
 No human cry but God hath heard!
No dark but melts in heaven's light!

And in great ages yet to be,
 The sorrowful tale forever told,
 Thy God Himself His lost shall fold,
And thine own mother comfort thee.

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DAY BY DAY

With staff and shoon I journey,
Up hill the way I take,
Past many a tangled thicket
O'ergrown with brier and brake;
And oft my feet are weary,
And oft my steps are slow,
By day by day I'm nearer
The land to which I go.

The foes who hate my Master
Have spread the path with snares,
In hope to stay my progress
And catch me unawares.
But ever to my spirit
New light and strength are given,
For never hosts of evil
Shall bar the road to heaven.

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Far worse than all temptations
That lure me from without
Are grewsome clouds and terrors
That compass me about.
Dear Lord, Thine eye can measure
The strife of fears within,
And Thou canst guide me safely,
Unscathed by shame or sin.

With staff and shoon I journey,
And still before mine eyes
The Lord who goes before me
Holds up a radiant prize.
And though I faint and falter
I yet shall overcome,
And win with saints and angels
The endless rest at home.

And sweet it is when tired
Because the way is long,
To pause beside a mile-stone
And lift a pilgrim's song.
For who shall lose his courage
However steep the way,
Who, with the Lord to help him,
Fares onward day by day?

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THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE

SET on a rounding hill-top
 And weather-stained and gray,
The little mountain school-house
 Looks down on the lonesome way.
No other dwelling is near it,
 'Tis perched up there by itself,
Like an old forgotten chapel
 High on a rocky shelf.

In at the cobwebbed windows
 I peered, and seemed to see
The face of a sweet girl teacher
 Smiling back at me.
There was her desk in the middle,
 With benches grouped anear,
Which fancy peopled with children—
 Grown up this many a year.

Rosy and sturdy children
 Trudging there, rain or shine,
Eager to be in their places
 On the very stroke of nine.

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Their dinners packed in baskets—
 Turnover, pie, and cake,
The homely toothsome dainties
 Old-fashioned mothers could make.

Where did the little ones come from?
 Fields green with aftermath
Sleep in the autumn sunshine,
 And a narrow tangled path,
Creeping through brier and brushwood,
 Leads down the familiar way;
But where did the children come from
 To this school of yesterday?

Oh, brown and freckled laddie
 And lass of the apple cheek,
The homes that sent you hither
 Are few and far to seek.
But you climbed these steeps like squirrels
 That leap from bough to bough,
Nor cared for cloud or tempest,
 Nor minded the deep soft snow.

Blithe of heart and of footstep
 You merrily took the road,
Life yet had brought no shadows,
 Care yet had heaped no load.

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And safe beneath lowly roof-trees
 You said your prayers at night,
And glad as the birds in the orchard
 Rose up with the morning light.

Gone is the fair young teacher;
 The scholars come no more
With shout and song to greet her,
 As once, at the swinging door.
There are gray-haired men and women
 Who belonged to that childish band,
With troops of their own around them
 In this sunny mountain land.

The old school stands deserted
 Alone on the hill by itself,
Much like an outworn chapel
 That clings to a rocky shelf.
And the sentinel pines around it
 In solemn beauty keep
Their watch, from the flush of the dawning
 Till the grand hills fall asleep.

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THE MOTHER'S CHAIR

THE century's day had just begun
When the bride, as shy as a small gray mouse,
Came home one eve at the set of sun,
To reign a queen in a wee bit house;
A wee bit house, but love was there,
And its throne was the bride's small rocking-chair.

Time fared along, and the rocking-chair
Kept pace with the rise and fall of a tune
That the little mother carolled there,
Slowly and sweetly, rune and croon,
Mother and baby and rockaby,
As the busy and beautiful years flew by.

And the wee bit house was a crowded nest
That was left one day for a statelier home,
But the small chair stood in its place with the best,
Throne for the mother, whoe'er might come.
Babies and babies were cradled there
In her tender arms in that rocking-chair.

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The years sped on like the waves in a race,
 And small grandchildren fluttered in;
The dear old hearth was the rallying-place
 For a bevy of youthful kith and kin.
Always the centre, standing there
Was the dear little mother's rocking-chair.

Like sifted snowflakes the days trooped on,
 Till the mother heard the angels call;
One sunrise broke with the mother gone—
 Only to heaven—that was all.
But, oh, it was lonely lingering where
We knelt to her in her little chair.

And one of the youngest of all the line,
 A gay girl, just out of college, sits
In that same old chair, and in shade and shine
 A look of her great-grandmother flits
Over her face, so sweet and fair,
As she rests in the prim little rocking-chair.

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THE LETTER SHE DID NOT WRITE

It was never set down in black and white,
The loving letter she did not write;
She thought it out as she baked the bread,
As she mended the stockings and made the bed;
She wove its beautiful sentences through
The morning's work that was hers to do;
But it never was written with ink and pen,
For the boys came home from school, and then
She hadn't a chance in black on white
To scribble the letter she did not write.

It never was dropped in the corner box
Which the faithful postman's key unlocks;
It never was even begun, you see,
Though it throbbed with a true heart's constancy;
The far-away mother, the friend beloved,
The kinsman dear, whom it must have moved,

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Were touching her hand with tender clasp,
Were holding her heart in insistent grasp,
But it never was sent on its blessed flight,
The dream of a letter she did not write.

She gave up trying the thing at last,
When the busy day was almost past,
Filled with the measure from sun to sun
Of the woman's work which is never done;
The duties sacred which yet seem slight,
The little wrongs which must be set right.
She had found her paper and taken her seat,
When the baby wakened; "Hush, my sweet!"
And Freddie brought her a puzzling sum,
And Teddy deafened her with his drum;
No wonder it faded quite out of sight.
The dear home letter she meant to write.

But yet, ah, yet were the waves of air
Not stirred by her tender, wordless prayer?
And did not her loving heart, full fain,
Send out its cry to her own, and pain
Of longing bring in a subtle way
A pleasure deep in the waning day,
When somehow she felt that an answer bright
Had come to the letter she could not write?

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THE UNRETURNING

EARTH, knowing not eld, in thy youth all
divine,
Though the ages unceasing are evermore thine,
Once more be birth-thrilled, until forth from
thy womb
Throng the myriad forms of the world's
waking bloom.

For the sweet of the year, great Earth-
mother, is here,
And, lo! on the uplands the flowers appear,
And blithe is the wing, and the song it is
glad,
And our yearning hearts only are heavy and
sad.

Earth, mother undying, thy tender arms keep
So safe in thy bosom the dear things asleep,
So strong is thy pulse-beat to bid them
again
Know battle and conquest, and hunger and
pain.

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The insistence of growth, the fair crown of the leaf,
The fruit in its ripeness, the rich bending sheaf—
Earth, this thou canst do, yet our dearer loves go,
And return not again from their beds hollowed low.

Our hearts are nigh breaking with bliss and with dole;
In the midst of the rapture, how lonely the soul!
Comes the bird to the green bough, the bud to the tree,
But not from the dark come my darlings to me.

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THANKSGIVING

WHAT time the latest flower hath bloomed,
The latest bird hath southward flown;
When silence weaves o'er garnered sheaves
Sweet idyls in our northern zone;
When scattered children rest beside
The hearth, and hold the mother's hand,
Then rolls Thanksgiving's ample tide
Of fervent praise across the land.

And though the autumn stillness broods
Where spring was glad with song and stir,
Though summer's grace leave little trace
On fields that smiled at sight of her,
Still glows the sunset's altar fire
With crimson flame and heart of gold,
And faith uplifts, with strong desire
And deep content, the hymns of old.

We bless our God for wondrous wealth,
Through all the bright benignant year;
For shower and rain, for ripened grain;
For gift and guerdon, far and near.

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We bless the ceaseless Providence
That watched us through the peaceful days,
That led us home, or brought us thence,
And kept us in our various ways.

And if the hand so much that gave
Hath something taken from our store,
If caught from sight, to heaven's pure light,
Some precious ones are here no more,
We still adore the Friend above,
Who, while earth's road grows steep and dim,
Yet comforts us, in tender love,
And holds our darlings close to Him.

Thanks, then, O God! From sea to sea
Let every wind the anthem bear!
And hearts be rife through toil and strife,
With joyful praise and grateful prayer.
Our fathers' God, their children sing
The grace they sought through storm and sun;
Our harvest tribute here we bring,
And end it with, "Thy will be done."

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Part III

MILE-STONES

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CHRISTMAS

We love to think of Bethlehem,
That little mountain town
To which on earth's first Christmas Day
Our blessed Lord came down;
A lowly manger for His bed,
The cattle near in stall,
There, cradled close in Mary's arms,
He slept, the Lord of all.

If we had been in Bethlehem,
We too had hasted fain
To see the Babe whose little face
Knew neither care nor pain.
Like any little child of ours
He came unto His own,
Though Cross and shame before him stretched
His pathway to His throne.

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If we had dwelt in Bethlehem,
We would have followed fast,
And where the Star had led our feet
Have knelt ere dawn was past.
Our gifts, our songs, our prayers had been
An offering, as He lay,
The Blessed Babe of Bethlehem,
In Mary's arms that day.

Now breaks the latest Christmas Morn!
Again the angels sing,
And far and near the children throng
Their happy hymns to bring.
All heaven is stirred! All earth is glad!
For down the shining way
The Lord who came to Bethlehem
Comes yet on Christmas Day.

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AUTUMN PLOUGHING

MORE than the beauty of summer
 Is shed on the hills to-day,
And the fragrant breath of the vintage
 Is borne on the winds away,
As, father and son together,
 The farmers are guiding the plough;
Deep and straight is the furrow
 They set in the green earth now.

"Plough deep," is the old man's counsel,
 As they turn the fallow field
That yet shall laugh with the harvest,
 And wave with a golden yield.
"Plough deep and straight," and the sturdy
 Answer rings back with a will,
As the tilth is ready for sowing
 On the sun-swept reach of hill.

I watch, and over my spirit
 There wafts an echoed psalm,
Sweet as a thought of our Father,
 And full of heaven's balm.

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God knows how deep the furrow
Needed by soul of mine,
Ere the stony soul shall quicken
And bloom with fruits divine.

And God who cares for the vintage
When the sap is in the stem,
And God who crowns the summer
With the autumn's diadem,
And God who all the winter
Beholds the world's bread grow,
May be trusted for loving kindness
Though his ploughshare lay me low.

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THE CHRISTMAS ANGELS

AGAIN, as of old, the shadows fold, and the
midnight sky is clear and cold;
Again, as when the shepherds watched, the
peasants sleep with their doors unlatched;
Serene and still over vale and hill, over palace
gateway and cottage sill,
In snow-white fleece lies the wintry peace,
and the angels hasten to do God's will.

Ever they keep above our sleep a vigil tender
and sweet and deep,
But they waken us now, from the skies aglow,
and the sound of their wings goes to
and fro.
Hark to the song of that seraph throng,
who nearest of all to the throne belong.
Hither they come to heart and home, with
hail to the right that shall smite the
wrong.

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Glory to God! They send abroad harpings
of heaven on earthly road,
Lifting the Name on their quivering flame,
as peace and good-will their notes pro-
claim,
Sending afar without a jar, wherever our
Father's children are.
The word of grace from the Father's face,
thrilling in music from star to star.

Sing to us, angels of Christmas, sing, while
sweet in the day dawn our glad bells
ring!
Sing of the Love that comes from above,
brooding and soft as the breast of the
dove,
While we swift forget the pain and fret, and
the pitiful things to which life is set,
And leave at the manger all thought of
danger, and worship the Child, God's
children yet.

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HOLLY AND PINE

WHEN Christmas comes with mirth and cheer
To clasp the circlet of the year,
Then forth we go for holly and pine,
Our wreaths of evergreen to twine;
Then swift we trip across the snow,
To find the gleaming mistletoe,
And straight and tall and branching free,
We haste to choose the Christmas-tree.

When Christmas comes, for Mother and Kate,
All sorts of sweet surprises wait;
And little fingers thrill with joy
As pretty gifts their skill employ.
When Christmas comes each tries her best
To make it beautiful for the rest,
And no one thinks of selfish ease,
But seeks his neighbor to serve and please.

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When Christmas comes, there is none so poor
He will turn the beggar from his door;
When Christmas comes the rich and great
Search out their brothers of low estate,
And the sleigh-bells ring, the church-bells chime,
The children sing in the merry time,
And smiles and greetings leap to lips,
That long were set in grief's eclipse,
For angels of comfort come and go,
Within the Yule-Log's radiant glow.

When Christmas comes, I think again,
Heaven stoops to wish good-will to men,
And God, who loves this earth of ours,
With love once more the whole earth dowers;
And the Babe who slept on Mary's knee,
Once more brings peace to you and me;
And storms may beat, and the winds be wild,
But the lowly mother, the Holy Child,
As in the manger, charm us yet.
All strife and evil our souls forget,
And each believing worshipper
Brings gold and frankincense and myrrh,
And the tongues of hate are hushed and dumb,
When again the Christmas angels come.

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MISS LUCINDA'S OPINION

BUT why do I keep Thanksgiving?—
 Did I hear you aright, my dear?
Why? When I'm all alone in life,
 Not a chick nor a child to be near;
John's folks all away in the West,
 Lucy across the sea,
And not a soul in the dear old home
 Save a little bound girl and me?

It does look lonesome, I grant it;
 Yet strange as the thing may sound,
I'm seldom in want of company
 The whole of the merry year round—
There's spring when the lilac blossoms,
 And the apple-trees laugh in bloom,
There's summer when great moths flit and
 glance
 Through the twilight's star-lit gloom.

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Then comes the beautiful autumn,
When every fragrant brier,
Flinging its garlands on fence and wall,
Is bright as living fire;
And then the white, still winter time,
When the snow lies warm on the wheat,
And I think of the days that have passed away,
When my life was so young and sweet

I'm a very happy woman
To-day, though my hair is white,
For some of my troubles I've overlived,
And some I keep out of sight.
I'm a busy old woman, you see, dear,
As I travel along life's road,
I'm always trying as best I can
To lighten my neighbor's load.

That child? You should think she'd try me?
Does she earn her bread and salt?
You've noticed she's sometimes indolent,
And indolence is a fault;
Of course it is, but the orphan girl
Is growing as fast as she can,
And to make her work from dawn till dark
Was never a part of my plan.

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I like to see the dimples
 Flash out on the little face,
That was wan enough, and still enough,
 When first she came to the place.
I think she'll do, when she's older;
 A kitten is not a cat,
And now that I look at the thing, my dear,
 I hope she'll never be that.

I'm thankful that life is peaceful;
 I should just be sick of strife,
If, for instance, I had to live along
 Like poor Job Slocum's wife;
I'm thankful I didn't say "yes," my dear,
 thankful as I can be,
When Job, with a sprig in his button-hole,
 Once came a-courting me.

I'm thankful I'm neither poor nor rich,
 Glad that I'm not in debt;
That I owe no money I cannot pay,
 And so have no call to fret.
I'm thankful so many love me,
 And that I've so many to love,
Though my dearest and nearest have gone before
 In the beautiful home above.

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I'll always keep Thanksgiving
In the good, old-fashioned way,
And think of the reasons for gratitude
In December, and June, and May,
In August, November, and April,
And the months that come between;
For God is good, and my heart is light,
And I'd not change place with a queen.

OF ALL DEAR DAYS

Of all dear days is Christmas day
The dearest and the best;
Still in its dawn the angels sing
Their song of peace and rest.
And yet the blessed Christ-Child comes
And walks the shining way,
Which brings to simple earthly homes
Heaven's light on Christmas day.

Then, deep in silent woods, the trees—
The hemlock, pine, and fir—
Thrill to the chilly winter breeze,
And waft a breath of myrrh;

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And far and near Kriss Kringle's bells
 Their airy music shake,
And dancing feet of boys and girls
 A sweeter joyance make.

The Christ-Child came to Bethlehem,
 To Mary's happy breast,
And found within her brooding arms
 A warm encircling nest.
And many a tiny cherub child
 In mother's arms to-day
Smiles like the Christ, the undefiled,
 On this dear Christmas day.

The Christ-Child's mother dimly saw
 The cross in faint outline
Above the baby face that held
 Her own in awe divine.
Thus over little cradle-beds
 The sacred passion-flower
Its purple sign of sorrow spreads
 In love's ecstatic hour.

To Mary's feet the Wise Men brought
 Their gifts of gold and spice;
The "Gloria" swept the midnight skies
 To greet her Pearl of Price.

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And down the ladder of the stars,
 Across the shining way,
The angels watched the Christ-Child come
 That first dear Christmas day.

Of all dear days is Christmas day
 The very dearest dear,
The crown and clasp and topmost sheaf
 Of all the joyful year.
Then dancing feet of boys and girls
 Go gayly to and fro,
And "Merry, merry Christmas" rings
 In all the winds that blow.

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IN BETHLEHEM

COME back to-day to Bethlehem,
The year is on the wane,
A truce to strife that wearies life,
A truce to grief and pain,
Oh, heart return to Bethlehem
And hear its song again!

If siren voices luring thee
Have turned thy thoughts aside,
If thou hast quaffed the bitter draught
Of envy or of pride,
If thou in agony of shame
Hast thy dear Lord denied,

Come back to-day to Bethlehem,
All in the quickening dawn,
With wistful eyes regard the skies
Ere yet the gloom is gone.
Oh, list the song of Bethlehem
Forever pealing on!

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Oh, burdened with the weight of sin,
And worn with many a care,
Here drop thy load, the sunrise road
Is open at thy prayer.
Return, return to Bethlehem,
The angels wait thee there!

Come back, come back to Bethlehem!
Behold the Virgin's Child
By prophets told in ages old,
The fair, the undefiled!
Lo, peace is born in Bethlehem
To soothe earth's tumults wild.

Come back to-day to Bethlehem!
Though thou hast wandered far,
No rest shall fill thy yearning breast
Until thou see the Star.
Oh, heart return to Bethlehem
Where yet the angels are!

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A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

THE sweetest gift the Father's love
 Sent ever down to men
Came in the stillness and the dark
 That thrilled to music when
All suddenly the hills grew bright
 And flamed athwart the sky
(A rift of heaven across the night)
 The glory from on high.

Strong angels swept their hearts of fire
 And sang of peace to men;
The wondering shepherds heard in awe
 And took their pathway then
Along the hills by crag and steep
 To find the mother-maid,
In whose glad arms that wintry night
 God's gift of gifts was laid.

All heaven was in sweet Mary's heart,
 The Babe had brought it her.
She did not think it strange to see
 The frankincense and myrrh,
The shining gold, the sages gave,
 As poured beneath a throne,
In honor of the kingly one,
 That hour her very own.

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So helpless, yet so beautiful,
 Heaven's gift, the undefiled,
Earth's proudest and earth's lowliest
 Bowed down before the Child.
And back to heaven the angels went
 Whose songs had cleft the night,
And Bethlehem's star was lost amid
 The morning's rapturous light.

Heaven's royal gift to earth that day,
 Heaven's gift of life and love,
Was just a helpless little child
 A mother bent above.
Worth more than ransom ever paid,
 In weight of gold or gem,
The child who came to ransom us—
 The Babe of Bethlehem.

And, aye, in many an earthly home
 God's sweetest gift and best
Is still a little child who sleeps
 Upon a mother's breast.
And over every cradled head
 The angels sing to-day,
With something of the sweetness once
 That thrilled the Bethlehem way.

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OCTOBER

We are drinking the wine of the ages
From cups that are brimming over
With the sweet of a honey unbought with money,
Distilled from the heart of the clover.

The fathomless blue of the heaven,
The beauty and bloom of the day,
Are making us young,—they are waking the tongue
Of the years that have passed away.

'Tis the radiant, rare October,
With the clusters ripe on the vine,
With scents that mingle in spicy tingle
On the hill slope's glimmering line.

And summer's a step behind us,
And autumn's a thought before,
And each fleet, sweet day that we meet on the way
Is an angel at the door.

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A THANKSGIVING FEAST

We two are the last my daughter!
To set the table for two,
Where once we had plates for twenty,
Is a lonesome thing to do.
But my boys and girls are scattered
To the east and the west afar,
And one dearer than even the children
Has passed through the gates ajar.

I'm wanting my bairns for Thanksgiving.
I thought last night as I lay
Awake in my bed and watching
For the breaking of the day,
How my heart would leap in gladness
If a letter should come this morn
To say that they could not leave us here
To keep the feast forlorn!

Samuel, my son in Dakota,
Is a rich man, as I hear,
And he'll never let want approach us,
Save the wanting of him near;

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While Jack is in San Francisco,
And Edward over the sea,
And only my little Jessie
Is biding at home with me.

And I feel like poor Naomi
When back to her own she went,
And they said, "Is this Naomi?"
She well knew what they meant.
I've stayed, and the lads have wandered,
And the time that was swift to go
When I was brisk and busy
Is laggard and dull and slow.

O! the happy time for a mother
Is when her bairns are small,
And into the nursery-beds at night
She tucks her darlings all;
When the wee ones are about her,
With gleeful noise and cry,
And she hushes the tumult with a smile,
Her brood beneath her eye.

But a mother must bear her burden
When her babes are bearded men,
On 'change and in the army,
Or scratching away with a pen
In some banker's dusty office,
As Martin is, no doubt—
A mother must bear her burden,
And learn to do without.

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I know the Scripture teaching,
To keep the halt and blind,
And the homesick and the desolate,
At the festal hour in mind.
Of the fat and the sweet a portion
I'll send to the poor man's door;
But I'm wearying for my children
To sit at my board once more.

I tell you, Jessie, my darling,
This living for money and pelf—
It takes the heart from life, dear,
It robs a man of himself.
This old bleak hill-side hamlet,
That sends its boys away,
Has a right to claim them back, dear,
On the fair Thanksgiving day.

Shame on my foolish fretting!
Here are letters, a perfect sheaf;
Open them quickly, dearest!
Ah me, 'tis beyond belief!
By ship and train they're hasting,
Rushing along on the way.
Tell the neighbors all my children
Will be here Thanksgiving day.

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GARDENS

THE wide, fair gardens, the rich, lush gardens,
Which no man planted, and no man tills;
Their strong seeds drifted, their brave bloom lifted,
Near and far over vales and hills;
Sip the bees from their cups of sweetness,
Poises above them the wild free wing,
And night and morn from their doors are borne
The dreams of the tunes that blithe hearts sing.

The waving gardens, the fragrant gardens,
That toss in the sun by the broad highway,
Growing together, gorse and heather,
Aster and golden-rod all the day.
Poppies dark with the wine of slumber,
Daisies bright with the look of dawn,
The gentian blue, and the long year through
The flowers that carry the seasons on.

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The dear old gardens, the pleasant gardens
Where mother used to potter about,
Tying and pulling, and sparingly culling,
And watching each bud as its flower laughed out;
Hollyhocks here, and the prince's feather,
Larkspur and primrose, and lilies white,
Sweet were the dear old-fashioned gardens
Where we kissed the mother and said "Good-night."

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"The dear old gardens . . .
Where mother used to potter about"

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Digitized by Google

AUTUMN DAYS

INTO the cup of our life to-day
What sweet, what spice is poured,
When every step of the common way
Is a garden of the Lord,
With the golden lights and the purple shades
Blending in rich accord.

As soon might we count the star beams
Or the sand on the shifting shore,
As number the flowers that baffle
Desire with more and more,
As if heaven had opened her windows
And rained them out of her store

By swamp and field and meadow,
On the edge of the mountain brook,
By the worn old fence and the hedge-row,
In the tiniest hidden nook—
Flowers in royal splendor
Wherever you chance to look.

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And the zest of the autumn noontide,
The crisp of the autumn night,
The feeling of rest after labor,
The wonderful crystal light,
It is joy of joys to be living
With the year at its crowning height.

Thank God for the beauty broadcast
Over our own dear land;
Thank God, who, to feed His children,
Opens His bounteous hand;
Thank God for the lavish harvests,
Thank Him from strand to strand.

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THE LOVING-CUP

'Tis the time of year for the loving-cup
To pass from hand to hand,
When the sounds of wassail and revelry
Are echoing o'er the land.
For North, where the skater skims the mere,
And South, where the redbird sings,
A pulse of cheer to the waning year
The merry Christmas brings.

'Tis the time of the year for the open hand
And the tender heart and true,
When a rift of Heaven has cleft the skies,
And the saints are looking through.
The flame leaps high where the hearth was drear,
And sorrowful eyes grow bright,
For a message dear that all may hear
Is borne on the Christmas light.

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'Tis the time of year for the cordial word
And the grace of the lifted load,
For brother to come to brother's help
On the rough and stony road.
'Tis the time to bury the ancient grudge,
And to make the quarrels up;
No hate has room where the roses bloom
'Round the Christmas loving-cup.

'Tis the time of year for children's joy,
And all in a scarlet row
The stockings hang in the ingle nook,
And the dreaming faces glow.
And the children turn and laugh in sleep,
To-morrow will be so gay;
For there never is mirth in this queer old earth,
Like the mirth of Christmas day.

'Tis the time of year for the loving-cup,
When the holly berries shine,
And with shout and song of man and maid,
The cedar and fir we twine.
Ah! pass the cup from the frozen North
To the South, where the robin sings,
For a pulse of cheer to the waning year
The merry Christmas brings.

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'Tis the time of year for the sweet surprise,
For the blessing we did not see,
Though straight from the infinite love of God
'Twas coming to you and me.
'Tis the time for seeking once again
The sheen of the Bethlehem star;
And for kneeling fain, with the age-long train,
Where the Babe and Mary are.

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THE DAYS WHEN NOTHING HAPPENS

For the days when nothing happens,
For the cares that leave no trace,
For the love of little children,
For each sunny dwelling-place,
For the altars of our fathers,
And the closets where we pray,
Take, O gracious God and Father,
Praises this Thanksgiving day.

For our harvests safe ingathered,
For our golden store of wheat,
For the cornlands and the vinelands,
For the flowers up-springing sweet,
For our coasts from want protected,
For each inlet, river, bay,
By Thy bounty full and flowing,
Take our praise this joyful day.

For the dangers to the Nation
Warded hence by sovereign love,
For the country, strong and hopeful,
Songs arise to God above.

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Never people called and chosen
 Had such loving-kindness shown
As this people, God-defended!
 Therefore, praises to the throne!

For our dear ones lifted higher
 Through the darkness to the light,
Ours to love and ours to cherish
 In dear memory, beyond sight,
For our kindred and acquaintance
 In Thy heaven who safely stay,
We uplift our psalms of triumph,
 Lord, on this Thanksgiving day.

For the quiet, uneventful,
 Blessed progress of our lives,
For the love of friends and neighbors,
 Parents, children, husbands, wives,
For the ever-present knowledge
 That our Saviour is our own,
On this day of glad Thanksgiving
 Praises rise to reach the throne.

For the hours when heaven is nearest
 And the earth-mood does not cling,
For the very gloom oft broken
 By our looking for the King,
By our thought that He is coming,
 For our courage on the way,
Take, O Friend, unseen, eternal,
 Praises this Thanksgiving day.

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GOOD-NIGHT

GOOD-NIGHT, sweet year, that brought to me
Dear friends to love, rare wealth to hold,
That gave me flowers for memory
More precious far than fleeting gold.
Good-night, sweet year, wherein I read
Full many a page with rare delight;
Thy latest hour will soon have fled
Oh, pleasant year, sweet year, good-night!

Good-night, sad year, that reft away
Some hopes I cherished; gave the pain
Of disillusion; dimmed the day
With wrecks of labor wrought in vain.
Good-night, sad year, that sometime knew
My pillow wet with bitter tears,
Good-night, sad year, that drifteth too
Far hence on Time's black sea of years.

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Good-night, blithe year, that to the home
Came smiling with so gay a face,
Bade roses bloom in hall and room,
Sent small feet pattering through the place,
That woke such bells of melody
As touch the eternal chords that ring
Where evermore the ransomed be
And saints for aye behold the King.

Good-night, brave year, that gave me strength,
And helped my will to overcome
In struggles, where the foe, at length
Baffled and beaten, left me dumb,
Yet thrilling with victorious song!
Good-night, brave year! I fain would keep
Thy secret still to right the wrong,
But thou art weary. Rest and sleep.

Good-night, O year, most sorrowful
Seen from the earth side, ache and loss
And clouded dawns, and dear ones gone,
Have deeply stamped thee with the cross.
Good-night, O sorrowful, sweet year,
Sweet with the promise of the day,
Where heaven's own morning shall appear
And all the shadows flee away.

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THE NEW YEAR

THE clock struck twelve in the tall church tower,
And the old year slipped away,
To be lost in the crowd of phantom years
In the House of Dreams that stay
All wrapped in their cloaks of gray.

Then swift and sweet o'er the door's worn sill
Came the youngest child of Time,
With a gay little bow and a merry laugh,
And a voice like bells achime,
Challenging frost and rime.

He found there was plenty for him to do,
The strong and the weak were here,
And both held out their hands to him
And gave him greetings dear,
The beautiful young new year.

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"You must bring us better days," they said,
"The old year was a cheat."
Which I think was mean when the year
was dead;
Such fate do dead years meet,
To be spurned by scornful feet!

"I bring you the best a year can bring,"
The new-comer stoutly spake,
"The chance of work, the gift of trust,
And the bread of love to break,
If but my gifts you'll take!"

The noblest thing a year can lay
In the lap of you or me,
The brave new year has brought this day—
It is Opportunity,
Which the wise are swift to see.

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AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

"Go forth in thy turn," said the Lord of
the years to the year we greet to-day—
"Go forth to succor my people, who are
thronging the world's highway.

"Carry them health and comfort, carry them
joy and light,
The grace of the eager dawning, the ease
of the restful night.

"Take them the flying snowflake, and the
hope of the hastening spring,
The green of the leaf unrolling, the gleam
of the bluebird's wing.

"Give them the gladness of children, the
strength of sinew and nerve,
The pluck of the man in battle, who may
fall, but will never swerve.

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"Send them the lilt of the singer, the sword
that is swift to smite
In the headlong rush of the onset, when the
wrong resists the right.

"Pour on them peace that crowneth hosts
which have bravely striven,
Over them throw the mantle they wear who
are God-forgiven.

"Shrive them of sin and of blunders; oh,
make my people free!
Let this year among years be thought of as
a time of jubilee,

"Throbbing with notes triumphant, waving
with banners fair,
A year of the grace of the Highest, to
vanquish human despair.

"For sorrow and sighing send them, O Year,
the dance of mirth,
And banish the moan and the crying from
the struggling, orphaned earth.

"Go forth in thy turn, O blithe New Year,"
said the Lord of the passing days;
And the angels in heaven heard Him, and
lifted a pæan of praise.

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THE THINNING RANKS

THE day grows lonelier; the air
 Is chillier than it used to be.
We hear about us everywhere
 The haunting chords of memory.
Dear faces once that made our joy
 Have vanished from the sweet home band,
Dear tasks that were our loved employ
 Have dropped from out our loosened hand.

Familiar names in childhood given
None call us by, save those in heaven.
We cannot talk with later friends
Of those old times to which love lends
Such mystic haze of soft regret;
We would not, if we could, forget
The sweetness of the by-gone hours,
So priceless are love's faded flowers;

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But lonelier grows the waning day,
And much we miss upon the way
Our comrades who have heard the call
That soon or late must summon all.

Ah, well! the day grows lonelier *here*.
Thank God, it doth not yet appear
What thrill of perfect bliss awaits
Those who pass on within the gates.
Oh, dear ones who have left my side,
And passed beyond the swelling tide,
I know that you will meet me when
I, too, shall leave these ranks of men
And find the glorious company
Of saints from sin forever free,
Of angels who do always see
The face of Christ, and ever stand
Serene and strong at God's right hand.

The day grows lonelier, the air
 Hath waftings strangely keen and cold,
But woven in, O glad, O rare,
 What love-notes from the hills of gold!
Dear crowding faces gathered there,
 Dear blessed tasks that wait our hand,
What joy, what pleasure shall we share,
 Safe anchored in the one home-land.

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Close up, O comrades, close the ranks,
 Press onward, waste no fleeting hour!
Beyond the outworks, lo! the banks
 Of that full tide, where life hath power,
And Satan lieth underfoot,
And sin is killed, even at the root.
Close up, close fast the wavering line,
Ye who are led by One divine.
The day grows lonelier apace,
But heaven shall be our trysting-place.

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Part IV

CLOSET AND ALTAR

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JESUS WENT BEFORE

THEIR faces to Jerusalem,
They stepped with laggard feet,
Half timorous, defiant half,
At what they went to meet.
But as they rested, or they talked
Their sad forebodings o'er,
Still leading on the little band,
Their Master went before.

He saw in vision maddened throngs;
He saw the crowded hall
Where scribe and priest should mock and flout,
Where cruel scourge should fall;
He saw the cross; its shadows lay
The toilsome pathway o'er;
But, pressing on with ardent soul,
The Master went before.

To-day Thy pledged disciples, Lord,
Meet sorrow, pain, and shame,
Their watchword in the trial time
Thine own all-conquering name.
Though flesh be weak, and spirit faint,
And heart be spent and sore,
They cannot fail in any strife
While Thou shalt go before.

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In presence of Thy bitter foes,
 In midst of dark defeat,
They yet shall snatch a victory
 And taste a triumph sweet;
Nor death itself shall crush them, Lord.
 Its final conflict o'er,
The ransomed hosts shall shout and sing,
 "Our Master went before!"

NOT READY

OUT of our pain and struggle,
 Up from our grief and dole,
We are swift to cry to the Healer
 For the touch that makes us whole.

Alas! we are not so ready,
 In the day of our joy and crown,
With the palms and the fragrant incense
 Laid at His altar down.

And how it must grieve the Master
 That His own are so slow to praise,
In the flush of their peace and gladness,
 The goodness which brims the days!

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JOINT HEIRS

THERE came a precious meaning
 Into the Word to-day—
A waft of sweetness from the land
 That is not far away,
A thought so pure, so high, so strong,
 That in my lonely lot
I kept the measure of a song,
 A song where pain is not.

Joint heirs with Christ the Blessed,
 The Father's equal Son,
So lifted into equal place
 With that beloved One,
So given rights of sonship
 Before the Father's face,
So made the heir of all things,
 By Heaven's most royal grace.

Not as the younger children
 Who forth from home may fare,
But as the first-born of the line
 The birthright I shall share.

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In the presence of the Father,
 Uplifted by the Son,
I shall be loved as Christ is loved,
 And dwell anear His throne.

Dear thought that bids me cherish
 To-day the hidden name
Which will be mine when Jesus
 His own shall come to claim;
Dear hope that casts its glory,
 A charm o'er daily care,
And gives me joy and freedom
 Oft as I kneel in prayer.

Joint heir with Christ the Blessed,
 The Christ-life mine to live,
And every day some sacrifice
 Of mine own will to give:
Some trial to endure for Him,
 Some brother's load to ease,
Or in the quiet home routine
 Some little child to please.

Joint heir with Christ in heaven,
 Joint heir with Christ on earth,
Made equal in the Father's sight,
 Divinely dowered in birth.
A waft of precious meaning
 Comes floating from that word,
A harp note from the ceaseless strain
 By saints and angels heard.

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THE DEAREST ONE

Oh! which of all my dearest dear is most
my very own?
Whom do I pray for oftenest when kneeling
at the throne?
'Tis not the one whose earthly cup is
brimmed with gift and grace,
Nor yet the one whose winsome heart looks
from the bonniest face;
The dearest dear of all mine own is one in
greatest need,
The one whose burden heaviest weighs,
whose path is rough indeed.
For him I claim the help of Heaven, for him
I cling about
The cross of the All-pitiful till flesh and
strength give out;
And still it is the neediest for whom I
plead and pray,
What time I bring my dearest dear to Christ
at fall of day.

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If, all imperfect as I am, thus love doth
reign in me,
How better far, and truer far, must Christ
the shepherd be,
Whose greater love hath largesse for the
weakest of his own—
Who, by the hunger and the thirst, the
faintness and the moan,
Doth measure still the bounty that, outflowing
day by day,
Uplifts and helps the weary one who stum-
bleth in the way.
Dear Love, sweet Love, thy dearest dear,
'tis he who most hath need,
Whose want and weakness are his prayer,
and without word can plead.

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A SONG OF THE BURDEN BEARER

OVER the narrow footpath
That led from my lowly door,
I went with a thought of the Master,
As oft I had walked before;
My heart was heavily laden,
And with tears my eyes were dim,
But I knew I should lose the burden
Could I get a glimpse of Him.

Over the trodden pathway,
Through the fields all shorn and bare,
I went with a step that faltered,
And a face that told of care;
I had lost the light of the morning,
With its shimmer of sun and dew,
But a gracious look of the Master
Would the strength of morn renew.

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While yet my courage wavered,
And the sky before me blurred,
I heard a voice behind me
Saying a tender word;
And I turned to see the brightness
Of heaven upon the road,
And suddenly lost the pressure
Of the weary, crushing load.

Nothing that hour was altered,
I had still the weight of care,
But I bore it now with the gladness
Which comes of answered prayer;
No grief the soul can fetter
Nor cloud its vision, when
The dear Lord gives the spirit
To breathe to His will, Amen.

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VESPERS

I LEAVE the city behind me,
 Shaking its dust from my feet;
Leaving its thunder and roar of trade,
 I haste to the covert sweet,
Where from the elm-boughs arching,
 As in long cathedrals dim,
Through the hush of the lingering twilight
 The thrushes sing a hymn.

In the town were hurry and bustle,
 And squalor and sin were there,
And the trail of the worship of Mammon,
 And the burden of strenuous care.
In the fields are silence and perfume,
 And one may kneel and pray
In the calm and cloistered forest
 At the tender fall of day.
The birds go flying homeward
 To the nest in the tree-tops dim,
And the vespers die into stillness—
 The thrush has finished his hymn.

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Oh, beautiful lanes, I love you
 As you skirt the babbling brooks,
As you seek the foot of the mountain,
 As you find the hidden nooks,
Where the ferns in great green masses
 The edge of the swamp-land rim,
Where I linger till stars awake above
 And the thrushes sing their hymn.

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"In the fields are silence and perfume"

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ONE STEP AT A TIME

THERE's a mine of comfort for you and me
In a homely bit of truth
We were tenderly taught, at the mother's knee,
In the happy days of youth.
It is, what though the road be long and steep,
And we too weak to climb,
Or, what though the darkness gather deep,
We take one step at a time.

A single step and again a step,
Until, by safe degrees,
The mile-stones past, we win at last
Home when the King shall please.
And the strangest thing is often this:
That the briery, tangled spots
Which cumber our feet are thick and sweet
With our Lord's forget-me-nots.

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It matters little the pace we take
If we journey sturdily on,
With the burden bearer's steady gait,
Till the day's last hour is gone,
Or if with the dancing foot of the child,
Or the halting step of age,
We keep the goal in the eye of the soul
Through the years of our pilgrimage.

And yet in the tramp of appointed days
This thing must sometimes be,
That we falter and pause and bewildered gaze,
For the road has led to the sea.
And the foeman's tread is on our track,
As once on the booming coast
Where the children of Israel, looking back,
Saw Pharaoh's threatening host.

Then clear from the skies our Leader's voice,
"Go forward," bids us dare
Whatever we meet with fearless feet
And the might of trustful prayer.
So, ever advancing day by day,
In the Master's strength sublime,
Even the lame shall take the prey,
Marching a step at a time.

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And what of the hours when hand and foot
We are bound and laid aside,
With the fevered vein, and the throbbing pain,
And the world at its low ebb-tide?
And what of our day of the broken heart,
When all that our eyes can see
Is the vacant space, where the vanished face
Of our darling used to be?

Then, waiting and watching, and almost spent,
Comes peace from the Lord's own hand,
In His blessed will, if we rest content,
Though we cannot understand.
And we gather anew our courage and hope
For the road so rough to climb;—
With trial and peril we well may cope,
A single step at a time.

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THE WORD SHE REMEMBERED

"You remember the sermon you heard, my dear?"
The little one blushed and dropped her eyes,
Then lifted them bravely, with look of cheer—
Eyes that were blue as the summer skies.

"I'm afraid I forgot what the minister said,
He said so much to grown-up men,
And the pulpit was 'way up over my head;
But I told mamma that he said 'Amen.'

"And 'Amen,' you know, means 'Let it be,'
Whatever our Lord may please to do,
And that is sermon enough for me,
If I mind and feel so, the whole week through."

I took the little one's word to heart,
I wish I could carry it all day long,
The "Amen" spirit, which hides the art
To meet each cross with a happy song.

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TE DEUM LAUDAMUS

We praise Thee! We bless Thee!
O Saviour, risen to-day!
Thou who didst drain the bitter cup
Thou who Thy life didst offer up,
To take our sins away!

We praise Thee! We bless Thee!
O Lord of death and life!
We follow where Thy feet have gone,
Through deepest night to fairest dawn,
To peace through stubborn strife!

We praise Thee! We bless Thee!
Even when our hearts are riven!
Thou art anear the dying bed,
Thy hand beneath the fainting head,
And Thou Thyself art heaven!

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We praise Thee! We bless Thee!
Beside each lowly mound
That, daisy-starred or lily-sown,
Is but the cover gently thrown
O'er one in Jesus found.

We praise Thee! We bless Thee!
With every pulse and breath.
Ours is the never-ending hymn
That saints began in ages dim,
Thou Conqueror of Death!

We praise Thee! We bless Thee!
This happy Sabbath day.
Through earth and skies the chorus rings,
O Lord of lords and King of kings,
Who takes our sins away.

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THINE IS THE POWER

THINE is the power, Lord,
Ours is the need;
Trusting Thy precious word,
Dare we to plead.
Weaker than infants are,
Lonely and sad,
Thou art our Morning Star:
Oh, make us glad.

Thine is the power, Lord,
Empty are we;
All grace with Thee is stored,
Filled let us be.
Vessels Thy hand has made,
Use us, we pray;
So be Thy love displayed
In us each day.

Thine is the power, Lord,
Thou wilt provide;
Thou canst the strength afford,
When we are tried;
Sorrows around us meet,
Deep the dark wave,
Still is Thy promise sweet,
Yet Thou wilt save.

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Thine is the power, Lord,
Therefore we come,
Trusting Thy precious word,
Thou art our home.
Till in Thine arms we rest,
Homesick are we;
Fold us to Thy dear breast,
Draw us to Thee.

A THOUGHT

SEEN by memory's magic,
Yesterday is golden;
Hope illumes the morrow;
Eyes are only holden
From some fair illusion
When they view to-day,
With its mists of morning,
Bitter blown away.

Yet of all the morrows
That from me are hidden;
All the bright days ended
Coming back unbidden;
None or was or will be
Richer in its way
Than this open-handed,
Slightly prized to-day.

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FOLDED HANDS

PALE, withered hands that more than four-
score years
Had wrought for others — soothed the hurt
of tears,
Rocked children's cradles, eased the fever's
smart,
Dropped tenderest balm in many an aching
heart—
Now stirless folded, like wan rose-leaves
pressed
Above the snow and silence of her breast.
In mute appeal they tell of labors done
And well-earned rest that came with set of
sun;
From the worn brow the lines of care are
swept
As if an angel's kiss the while she slept
Had smoothed the cobweb wrinkles quite
away
And given back the peace of childhood's
day.

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A smile is on the lips as if she said,
"None know life's secret save the happy dead."
And, gazing where she lies, we feel that pain
And parting cannot cleave her soul again.
And we are sure that they who saw her last
In that dim vista which we call the past,
Who never knew her old and weary-eyed,
Remembering best the maiden and the bride,
Have sprung to greet her with the olden speech,
The dear sweet names no later love can teach,
And "Welcome Home" they cried, and grasped her hands—
So dwells the mother in the best of lands.

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THE CURTAIN FALLS

OVER the sorrow and over the bliss,
Over the tear-drop, over the kiss,
Over the crimes that blotted and blurred,
Over the wound of the hasty word,
Over the deeds in weakness done,
Over the battles lost and won,
Now at the end of the flying year,
Year that to-morrow will not be here,
Over our freedom, over our thralls,
In the hush of the midnight the curtain falls.

Over our gain and over our loss,
Over our crown and over our cross,
Over the fret of our discontent,
Over the ill that we never meant,
Over the scars of our self-denial,
Over the strength that conquered trial,
Now in the end of the flying year,
Year that to-morrow will not be here,
Quietly final, the prompter calls;
Swiftly the dusk of the curtain falls.

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Over the crowds and the solitudes,
Over our shifting, hurrying moods,
Over the hearths where bright flames leap
Over the cribs where the babies sleep,
Over the clamor, over the strife,
Over the pageantry of life,
Now in the end of the flying year,
Year that to-morrow will not be here,
Swiftly and surely, from starry walls,
Silently downward the curtain falls.

THE END

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